

A Healthy Puget Sound by 2020 - A Strategic Framework to Guide Puget Sound Partnership's Recommendations

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This framework is intended to assist the Puget Sound Partnership and other interested parties in building agreement on a vision for Puget Sound, measures of its health, the challenges facing it, and opportunities to improve our efforts to preserve the Sound. The information in this framework, when completed, will provide a critical foundation for the Partnership's recommendations.

This version of the framework is presented as questions so that the Partnership can seek input from the general public, scientists and interested organizations. The framework is as yet an incomplete draft, intended to provoke ideas and discussion. It does not yet reflect a consensus of the Partnership and may have statements with which individual partners might disagree. The framework will help shape the Partnership's future meetings, the research conducted on its behalf, and the public outreach necessary to inform its recommendations.

1. The Vision—What Does A Healthy Puget Sound by 2020 Look Like?

- a. Puget Sound marine and freshwaters are clean, non-toxic and healthy. Fish and shellfish are safe to consume and beaches are safe for swimming and enjoyment by Washington residents and visitors
- b. Native species once again thrive in Puget Sound and its watersheds. Our salmon, orca, rockfish, marine and shore birds, and forage fish all thrive in the basin
- c. Natural shorelines, estuaries, and beaches throughout the Sound and its watersheds sustain life and can be enjoyed by our children, their children and beyond
- d. Our farms, forests, fishing and marine industries are an integral part of the economy and the fabric of our communities
- e. Our economy continues to be vibrant and thrives in productive harmony with a healthy Sound
- f. Our population has grown in a manner that contributes to vibrant human urban and rural communities.

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

2. What are the benefits to society of a healthy Puget Sound?

- a. The direct economic contributions of a healthy Puget Sound are xxx.
- b. The indirect economic contributions are xxx
- c. The ecological services provided by the Sound are xxx.
- d. The contributions to the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest from a healthy Puget Sound are xxx.
- e. The avoided costs from not having to address degraded landscapes, continuous clean-up and restoration costs, and dealing with threatened and/or endangered species are xxx.
- f. Others? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

What should be quantified to successfully evaluate the benefits in relationship to the cost of achieving a healthy Puget Sound?

3. How would we know if the Sound is healthy in 2020?

- a. Positive trends in abundance, productivity, and distribution of key native species.
- b. Significant reductions in loadings from toxics, nutrients and pathogens.
- c. Sufficient, high quality habitat that provides critical ecological processes, functions and life support for key species
- d. In-stream flows are sufficient to support salmon recovery and other ecological functions and there is sufficient water for people.
- e. Other? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

What specific targets and measures are crucial both scientifically and for the general public to help everyone know if we are succeeding?

4. What critical challenges will clearly affect success?

- a. Managing population growth in a way that allows for economic prosperity, increased investment in the environment and mitigation of significant environmental impacts.
- b. Having sufficient scientific certainty over time to continuously target the greatest threats effectively and to understand key interdependencies.
- c. Adapting to and mitigating for the impacts from climate change.
- d. Ensuring coordination, efficiency, accountability, and trust in our complex political and institutional structures.
- e. Sufficient reliable funding to make the investments needed to succeed by 2020.
- f. Others? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

5. Where are we making progress and need to maintain/accelerate it?

- a. Protecting public health through treating sewage, educating people on health risks and closing shellfish, fishing and swimming areas that could be a health hazard.
- b. Cleaning up contaminated sediments
- c. Managing non-point pollution around defined areas, such as shellfish beds.
- d. Building collaboration at the watershed level.
- e. Identifying the types of habitats that need to be maintained as functioning and creating the mechanisms to protect them
- f. Improving our ability to reduce and prevent spills
- g. Identifying and removing derelict gear, vessels and structures from the sound
- h. Identifying key indicators of health of the system and tracking them
- i. Others? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

6. Where are existing programs and efforts falling short and need to improve?

- a. Treatment for increased nutrient loading from recent and future population growth.
- b. Sufficient habitat protection and restoration for key ecological functions.
- c. Continued loading of persistent toxics into the Sound.
- d. Treatment of new compounds, such as those found in pharmaceuticals and personal care products (not necessarily persistent, hence the separate category)
- e. Managing stormwater in existing urban and suburban areas, in areas of new development and in rural areas.
- f. Protecting the viability of species before they reach threatened or endangered status
- g. Increasing streamflows where there are limitations for salmon recovery.
- h. Others? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

7. What's missing from what we are currently doing?

- a. Sufficient ownership, accountability, and follow through, including funding, on key actions/plans.
- b. Supportive political environment necessary to make and sustain difficult decisions over time.
- c. Measures and an adaptive management system to track progress, learn more to reduce uncertainty, and adjust efforts effectively and efficiently.
- d. Technologies and approaches that can deal with the problems we face
- e. Coordination, alignment around shared goals and targets, consistency in approach and level of effort across jurisdictions
- f. Others? Different?

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

8. Are there key breakthroughs, innovations or advancements in understanding on the horizon that could address current barriers to success?

- a. Advances in sewage treatment technology.
- b. Water reclamation and reuse
- c. Protection of habitat through smart growth approaches such as clustering of rural development, transfer of development rights, low impact development and natural infiltration methods to prevent stormwater runoff
- d. Ownership and financing of working forests.
- e. Incentive programs that address both environmental improvements and agricultural prosperity.
- f. Actions that reduce pollution, especially toxics at the source (such as reengineering, product labeling requirements, others)

Do you have suggested improvements and/or additions to the example elements listed above?

The Partnership is seeking input on the above questions from all people with an interest in these issues. The Partnership will use those answers as a basis to develop preliminary recommendations in June and final recommendations in October (see next page).

Puget Sound Partnership Recommendations

The Partnership's recommendations in June (preliminary) and October (final) of 2006 will address the five charges from the Governor---2020 goals, actions and priorities, organizational structure, funding, public engagement and support, and science. The recommendations will also address –what needs to be done by whom, and what are the short and long-term priorities. See next page

